



**The House of Representatives
STATE OF HAWAII**

NEWS RELEASE

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**HOUSE PASSES FUNDING FOR NEW DRUG
INTERDICTION PROGRAM**

HONOLULU. The House Finance Committee last night approved funding for a new pilot program aimed at addressing the large amount of illegal drugs coming into the state.

"We believe that this is an important component of the House's overall plan to resolve the drug epidemic in Hawaii," said Rep. Ken Ito, Chairman of the Committee on Public Safety. "It's an uphill battle, but a war Hawaii can not afford to lose."

Senate Bill 2926, HD2 appropriates \$700,000 and calls for six new investigator positions for the Department of Public Safety, Narcotics Enforcement Division. The money would be used for drug detection equipment, trained dogs, and other expenses needed to operate the program.

"Illegal drugs, particularly methamphetamine, continues to destroy communities, and we must stay focused on this problem and use every tool possible to protect our families and children from substance abuse," said Rep. Pono Chong, Vice Chairman of the Public Safety Committee. "This pilot program will help to address the flow of illegal drugs into and throughout the state."

The program, which would conduct random inspections for illegal drugs and other hazardous materials, would be in coordination with the Hawaii High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Task Force.

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